

SHORT COMMUNICATION

Xyleborus saxesenii (Ratzeburg) (Coleoptera: Scolytidae) new to Cornwall.—A single live specimen of *Xyleborus saxesenii* was found beneath the bark of a large beech trunk section lying in Higginsmoor Wood on the Lanhydrock Estate in E. Cornwall, 16.iii.1993. The beech lay alongside a well-used public path and had presumably been felled for “public safety” reasons. This is a new county record and a further extension of the known range. The nearest records known to me are from Gloucestershire (Atty, 1983), Cornwall (Duff, 1993) and in the far east of Dorset—Cranborne Chase (Pearce, 1926) and Wareham in 1991 (T. Winter, pers. comm.). It is clearly rare in these counties.

Higginsmoor Wood is a large area of oak- and beech-dominated woodland on the alluvial flats of the Fowey River. It appears to be ancient woodland and is therefore a rare example of ancient alluvial floodplain woodland—a type which has been extensively cleared for agriculture over the millennia throughout the British Isles.

Beech is believed not to be native in Cornwall, and the old beech of this particular estate undoubtedly originate from landscape plantings in the early 18th century. Although the favoured tree of *X. saxesenii* (in my experience, at least), this scolytid does also breed in a wide range of other tree species, and so its presence here does not contradict its recognized association with ancient woodland and pasture-woodland (Harding & Rose, 1986). The same beech timber also contained the beetles *Cerylon ferrugineum* Steph. and *Cylindronotus laevioctostriatus* (Goeze), and the bug *Xylocoris cursitans* (Fall.). Another scolytid, *Dryocoetinus villosus* (F.), was abundant in the thick bark of a fallen oak branch close by, and I took a single specimen of *Selatosomus bipustulatus* (L.) on a riverside oak here in 1989. All of these appear to be good indicators of ancient woodland and pasture-woodland in Cornwall (Alexander, 1991, 1993), although only the last is recognized as such for Britain as a whole (Harding & Rose, 1986).

My thanks to Tim Winter for his comments on an earlier draft of this note.—K. N. A. Alexander, National Trust, 33 Sheep Street, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 1QW.

REFERENCES

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BOOK NOTICE

A review of the scarce and threatened Coleoptera of Great Britain. Part 2, by P. S. Hyman and M. Parsons, Peterborough, JNCC, 1994, 248 pages, paperback, £15 + £3 p. & p.—Families covered in this volume are: Cryptophagidae, terrestrial Hydrophilidae, Lathridiidae, Leiodidae, Nitidulidae, Pselaphidae, Ptiliidae, Scydmaenidae, Sphaeridiidae and Staphylinidae. There are also several pages of addenda to part 1. The beetles contained in this part of the review are the ‘difficult’ groups, and a footnote to every page states that the statuses of the species are open to debate because of the difficulty of identification. Nevertheless this is an extremely valuable and welcome book which, together with part 1, serves as a basis from which coleopterology in Britain can move forward.